

# NEWS Release

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For Immediate Release

**Topic:** First Steps Resource Fair Promises Fun  
and Learning for Mississippi Families  
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Parents take a one-stop shopping trip at the First Steps Resource Fair Thursday, April 6, at the Jackson Medical Mall to learn more about resources available for their special needs kids.

The Fair kicks off with festivities beginning at 1 p.m. with continuous educational opportunities in a carnival-like atmosphere until 6 p.m. Sponsors of the event -- The Departments of Health, Education, and Mental Health -- aim to assist families of youngsters from birth through three years of age in identifying children who require special education services.

“The Fair is a wonderful chance for families and children statewide to discover what the First Steps program is all about through a fun, yet educational experience,” assured Helen Eaves, Fair Coordinator.

Program dignitaries Lieutenant Governor Amy Tuck; Dr. Ed Thompson, Department of Health; Dr. Richard Thompson, Department of Education; Dr. Randy Hendrix, Department of Mental Health open the Fair with a special ribbon cutting ceremony at 1 p.m.

“The Fair provides six hours of full access for parents and children to learn about coordinated services the First Steps program provides to help ensure the most efficient and appropriate use of the state’s resources for Mississippi families,” said Eaves.

The Fair is designed to acquaint parents, services providers, vendors, state officials, and other children's proponents with the strides Mississippi's made in helping families and children with special needs.

Vendors offer information and answers to any questions for participants about assistive technology, medical services, speech/language services, psychological services, special instruction, service coordination, audiological services, special camps, adaptive toys, and, vision and hearing.

Additionally, entertainers perform from 1:30 to 6 p.m.:

- 1:30 – story teller Diane Williams of Madison
- 2:00 – Voices of Inspiration Boswell Regional Center Choir
- 2:30 – Genesis One Christian School Choir of Mendenhall
- 3:00 – Praise in Motion
- 3:30 – Pearl vocalist Betsy Potter
- 4:00 – Door prize drawing
- 5:00 – Messengers Puppet Group, Broadmoor Baptist Church

Big Bird, Mickie Mouse, and Donald Duck entertain all corners at Kidsville during the Fair.

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